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New York

President: Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki ..... (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Tommo Monthe (Cameroon), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Agenda item 70 (*continued*)

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Oman.

Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): The world is watching with grave concern the unfolding disaster in Pakistan, whose dimensions we continue to ascertain. The floods, which began more than three weeks ago, have affected about one fifth of the area of the country, with disastrous effects on its agricultural heartland. The scale of the flooding is indeed great. It has resulted in the deaths of more than 1,500 people and threatens the lives of many others. The number of those displaced is estimated at more than 20 million. Monsoon rains are expected to continue to fall for several weeks to come. That is very bad news for the people. In addition, there are fears that diseases such as cholera may spread, exacerbating the problems faced by the population and causing more death.

The international community cannot afford to sit back and watch this calamity unfold before our eyes without doing anything. Pakistan is in dire need of assistance for the millions who urgently require food, water, shelter and medical treatment. The United Nations has launched a $459 million Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan, and the World Bank will redirect $900 million in existing loans to Pakistan to help address the catastrophe and the recovery.

The Sultanate of Oman and its neighbour Pakistan are bound by close historical, brotherly and good-neighbourly relations. We in the Sultanate are deeply touched and saddened by the great loss of life and the damage done to infrastructure by the floods. The Sultanate of Oman expresses its full solidarity and sympathy with the people of Pakistan. In consultation with Pakistani authorities, the Government of the Sultanate of Oman has extended its full support and assistance to the Government of Pakistan to meet the urgent immediate needs of the people affected.

We pray to almighty God for the floods to recede so that the authorities can begin the daunting task of rebuilding and provide humanitarian assistance to affected people in need, start reconstruction and help to normalize people's lives and get them back to work.

On behalf of the Government of Oman, I convey our heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Pakistan on the deaths of thousands of innocent men, women and children. At this hour of need, the Sultanate of Oman stands by them and wishes them a speedy return to normalcy, development and prosperity.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of France.

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Mr. De Rivière (France) (*spoke in French*): For nearly three weeks, Pakistan has suffered the worst natural disaster in its history. We are shocked by the scale of the flooding, the violence of the incessant rainfall and the impact on the lives of more than 15 million Pakistanis. I should like again to express France's solidarity with the authorities and the people of Pakistan, as well as our heartfelt support to the victims and their families.

Faced with a disaster of such scale, the international community must mobilize in a massive way, side by side with the Pakistani State, to assist the population. The United Nations must remain at the forefront of the international community's efforts. We welcome the personal commitment of the Secretary-General, who has just travelled to disaster-affected areas, and of the President of the General Assembly, who took the initiative to convene this meeting. We also welcome the presence in New York of the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Assistance to Pakistan.

As yesterday we marked World Humanitarian Day, I would like to pay tribute to the United Nations teams and humanitarian personnel present in Pakistan and throughout the world. They are discharging their mission with exemplary devotion and bravery. I pay special tribute to those who have lost their lives helping the most vulnerable. Finally, I would like to recall the principles of neutrality, impartiality and independence of humanitarian assistance, which are the very keys for success.

We are proud of having, over the years, developed a close relationship of trust with Pakistan. President Sarkozy reaffirmed his commitment to this special relationship when he welcomed President Zardari in Paris on 2 August. Our exacting bilateral dialogue means that today we can address any issue with our Pakistani friends, whether we are discussing the fight against terrorism, the regional situation or economic cooperation. Pakistan in turn knows that it can count on France's support to meet the huge challenges it has to face.

There is a pressing need to assist victims now and to meet and respond to the emergency appeal made by the United Nations. France has already mobilized €1.3 million of bilateral assistance to provide foodstuffs, drinking water, shelter and medicine to individuals who require them, which is our immediate priority. France has also committed, through the European Union — and I here associate myself with the statement made yesterday by Belgium on behalf of the European Union (see A/64/PV.110) — to mobilize additional funds to face this huge humanitarian crisis.

In addition to its financial assistance, France is contributing material assistance. It has decided to send an aircraft carrying 70 tons of humanitarian assistance cargo, including shelter, blankets and water purification pills. It is also providing means of transport for French non-governmental organizations that are contributing emergency assistance to the many victims in Pakistan.

France is also ready to mobilize national military strategic transportation resources to transport international assistance within the framework of the airlift operation planned by NATO, which will thus accelerate the provision of assistance to Pakistan. France is ready and willing to participate in consideration of how to improve prevention, planning and risk management systems for natural disasters in Asia.

Beyond this emergency, the international community must rapidly commit in a massive and sustainable way, side by side with the Government of Pakistan, on the path to reconstruction. All the damage caused to infrastructure, means of communication, key public services and economic sectors, will have a serious impact whose scale will only become apparent once the rains have stopped. We must assist the Pakistani authorities in meeting this reconstruction challenge while continuing our commitment to the path of reform and the fight against terrorism. What is at stake here is the security of Pakistan's inhabitants, including the 3 million individuals displaced in the north-west by the conflict against Islamic fundamentalists. The stability of the region is also at stake, as is the success of our collective action in Afghanistan.

We are ready and willing to mobilize our assistance and resources to that end. During the pledging conference in Tokyo in April 2009, France pledged $300 million. Half of that amount has already been disbursed for economic development projects in Pakistan, including in the water and energy sectors. Projects planned for this year, such as the rehabilitation of the hydroelectric power plant in Jaban and the financing of a water treatment station in Lahore, will

contribute to meeting the problems of access to drinking water that are especially pressing at this point.

We hope that the European Union too will now begin the process of identifying reconstruction actions which need to be undertaken. The European Union and Pakistan have forged a global partnership which must be strengthened. The European Union can further increase its contribution to the economic development of Pakistan, for which it is already its leading trade partner. Our efforts will be further carried out in various multilateral forums, such as financial and development forums.

Finally, we will be mobilized in the framework of the Group of Friends of Democratic Pakistan. The next ministerial meeting of the Group, which is planned for mid-October in Brussels, should serve as an opportunity to take stock of reconstruction activities to be undertaken and to ensure that they fall within the framework of reforms which the Government of Pakistan must continue to undertake.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Finland.

Mr. Taalas (Finland): Finland aligns itself with the statement made at the 110th meeting by the Foreign Minister of Belgium on behalf of the European Union.

I would like to express our heartfelt support to the people of Pakistan. The catastrophic floods have provoked very strong feelings of sympathy in my country. This year, Finland has allocated a total of €5.7 million in humanitarian assistance to Pakistan. Our contribution has been channelled through the United Nations system and Finnish aid groups. Out of this amount, a total of €4.4 million is new funding earmarked to support the victims of the floods. Finnish relief personnel are already on the ground, and more will be coming.

Besides humanitarian aid to Pakistan, Finland has announced a commitment of €3 million to the multi-donor trust fund for reconstruction and development in Pakistan's North-West Frontier province. Finland will continue to stand by Pakistan.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Loulichki (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I should like to begin by warmly welcoming the initiative of the President of the General Assembly, Mr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, to convene this meeting — crucial for the brotherly people of Pakistan. On behalf of my country, I would like to once again extend to the people of Pakistan our deepest condolences. In taking the initiative to organize this plenary meeting, the President reminds us that humanitarian and human solidarity are, in essence, collective and universal.

Today's meeting sends a strong political signal to every part of the international community — Governments, international organizations, international financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society and others — to come to the aid of this battered population, which finds itself helpless before floods that are greater than any before in the history of that country. The tragic circumstances of some 20 million people command our attention, and we hope that today's meeting will effectively enhance the mobilization and commitment of the international community to take up the challenge posed by natural disasters.

On the basis of the strong and friendly ties that bind the Moroccan and Pakistani people, His Majesty King Mohammed VI gave instructions, at the first announcement of this catastrophe, to provide emergency humanitarian assistance to the Pakistanis who have been affected, through a financial package of roughly $1 million and humanitarian assistance of a further $1 million in the form of medication and pharmaceuticals. The Kingdom of Morocco believes that, despite the scope of this natural disaster and its impact on the families and loved ones of the victims, the Pakistani people will be able to recover the faith and strength it needs to overcome this gruelling ordeal and recover from its devastating consequences.

While Morocco welcomes the launching last week of the Pakistan Initial Flood Emergency Response Plan, we believe nonetheless that the financial assistance of $460 million called for by the Plan is far from enough to meet the expectations and the urgent needs of the affected population. We hope that the impulse for brotherly solidarity will gain momentum and that the assistance that will finally be provided will be sufficient to largely ease the burden of the Pakistani authorities, who have to face other challenges as well.

Beyond this new tragedy for the people of Pakistan, it is important to recall that natural disasters, beyond their environmental considerations, today

require urgent, collective and responsible action. The international community must work to identify appropriate and timely responses capable of combating these natural scourges and reducing their destructive impact.

In this regard, my country would like to recall the proposal made at the 2006 meeting on the New Asian-African Strategic Partnership to, inter alia, establish an African-Asian mechanism to gain, in consultation with the relevant international organizations, a better understanding of the phenomenon of natural disasters caused by climate change. In line with this, Morocco is in favour of a comprehensive United Nations study of the regions that are exposed to such disasters and a world map of the most vulnerable areas. The ultimate objective would be to integrate risk prevention in the development strategies of countries that are in these regions.

The leadership of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon is an important asset in the effort to indeed push for the implementation of this project. The Secretary-General has clearly shown this by visiting the site of the disaster, and we would like to pay a well-deserved tribute to him.

With respect to the African continent, Morocco, at the 26 August 2008 climate change meeting, advocated a regional initiative based on African priorities for climate change adaptation. This initiative, which also aims to strengthen the technical capabilities and institutional support for adaptation, should include the establishment of an African network of centres of excellence on climate change, along the same lines as the regional information system on climatic risks in the short, medium and long term.

Finally, Morocco is in favour of the implementation of a programme of work focused on the need for an early warning system, to map the vulnerabilities and carry out risk assessments with a view to identifying the priorities of developing countries with respect to climate change adaptation.

The appeal for assistance to the affected population of Pakistan is an appeal to our common conscience and our humanity. Let us all live up to our humanitarian duty and provide proof that nations — all nations — are united in the face of this ordeal.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of China.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation wishes to thank the President of the Assembly, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and Foreign Minister Qureshi of Pakistan for the briefings on the latest developments regarding the floods in Pakistan and the humanitarian assistance efforts of the international community. I also wish to thank the Assembly President for having convened these plenary meetings on World Humanitarian Day. This gives us an opportunity to review the great significance of both respecting the guiding principles for the provision of humanitarian assistance and strengthening international cooperation and United Nations coordination on humanitarian relief activities.

The massive floods during this year's monsoon season in Pakistan, which were on a scale rarely seen, have affected about 20 million people and left thousands dead or missing. On behalf of the Chinese Government and people, I wish to express our deepest sympathy and condolences to the Government and the people of Pakistan for the loss of life and property caused by the recent floods.

We have noted that, under the leadership and with the coordination of the Pakistani Government, relief efforts are now in full swing. The Chinese Government also commends the timely and effective response of Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, the relevant United Nations agencies and the Central Emergency Response Fund to support Pakistan's disaster relief efforts.

Immediately after the flooding occurred, China acted promptly to provide humanitarian support and assistance to Pakistan, thus demonstrating the profound friendship between the Chinese and Pakistani Governments and people. On 4 August, some 80 tons of urgently needed relief supplies provided by the Chinese Government arrived in Islamabad, including tents, medicine, power generators and water purification equipment, worth 10 million yuan renminbi (RMB).

The latest developments suggest that the flooding in Pakistan may pose an unprecedented humanitarian challenge. The monsoon rains in the weeks ahead will once again put to the test the humanitarian response capacity of Pakistan and the international community. The flood is merciless, but the world is full of sympathy and compassion. As tens of million of people in the affected areas in Pakistan, including several million children, are waiting anxiously for food,

drinking water, medicine and temporary shelter, the Chinese people stand in solidarity with them. We must take action immediately to pool our efforts and mobilize all available relief resources and moral support around the world.

In this regard, the Chinese Government has decided to provide an additional 50 million RMB worth of humanitarian supplies to the Pakistani Government. The first batch of relief supplies, which arrived at the affected areas yesterday, included 30 tons of food, 1,200 tents, 1,000 power generators and 23,800 blankets, as well as medicine, mineral water and water purification equipment. The rest of the relief supplies will be delivered today. The Chinese Government will continue to do what it can to provide assistance to Pakistan in the light of the development of the disaster.

I also wish to take this opportunity to congratulate the President of the General Assembly on the adoption by consensus yesterday of resolution 64/294, on the flooding in Pakistan. The resolution sends a timely, positive and strong message of the solidarity of the international community. It will also inject fresh impetus into international efforts to support Pakistan in the areas of disaster relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Nepal.

Mr. Acharya (Nepal): At the outset, I should like to express our appreciation the President of the General Assembly for having convened these plenary meetings to consider the humanitarian crisis in Pakistan, a friendly neighbouring country of Nepal and a fellow member of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation, with which we enjoy close bonds, historical ties, friendship and goodwill.

We thank His Excellency Mr. Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, for his detailed and sombre briefing on the sweeping devastation from which his country is suffering at present. Our heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathies go to the Government and the people of Pakistan on the unprecedented loss of life and massive destruction of livelihoods and property. And it is not over yet, as incessant rains continue unabated. As much land remains submerged in water, we see the clear danger of disease spreading as well as of impending hunger on a larger scale.

As stated here over the past two days, this natural disaster has taken a heavy toll on Pakistan, with thousands of people killed, nearly 20 million rendered homeless or otherwise affected and cropland and infrastructure destroyed on a massive scale. This devastating crisis is yet another stark example of the adverse impact of climate change events on the safety and livelihoods of people. And all this is happening against the backdrop of Pakistan's fight against extremism.

The sheer magnitude and impact of the natural catastrophe and consequent humanitarian disaster in Pakistan is beyond the capability of any country to cope with, even with all possible preparations. The video presentation made here yesterday stated that today Pakistan is calling — and humanity is calling. This is an apt reminder to us all of the need for action.

We appreciate the relief and rescue efforts of the Government of Pakistan and all the Pakistani institutions and people. We also applaud the Secretary-General for his personal leadership in responding quickly to the crisis, and we applaud the other international agencies working on the ground around the clock to provide rescue and relief and to support the flood-affected population.

The scale of the disaster, which the Secretary-General has described as a "slow-motion tsunami" (*A/64/PV.110*), is unprecedented and requires a global response of an unprecedented scale. Similarly, we express our appreciation to the international community for immediately extending a helping hand to the Government of Pakistan at this critical time. However, we should like to stress that the assistance and support must be commensurate with the scale and intensity of the devastation. We must not fail to help those in greatest need in this hour of great tragedy.

In this context, we should like to emphasize that Pakistan needs scaled-up international support and further funding to accelerate its immediate relief efforts as well as for reconstruction of its damaged infrastructure, which also calls for medium- and longer-term support. The international community must leave no stone unturned to marshal the resources necessary to respond to the needs at hand. The compassionate humanitarian ideals and humane dispensation that we all espouse as our larger driving force for common good call for us to give nothing less than our maximum help and support for Pakistan.

It is in this spirit that the Government of Nepal has decided to make a modest contribution of 10 million Nepalese rupees as an expression of support and solidarity to the Government and the people of Pakistan. We call upon the international community to provide generous, maximum assistance so that relief and rescue operations on the ground do not suffer for want of resources.

In concluding, I wish for Pakistan's speedy recovery from this merciless blow of nature and for the prosperity and development of its people.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Quinlan (Australia): Like everyone, Australians have been very deeply saddened by the tragic humanitarian emergency in Pakistan, and I should like to convey the condolences of all Australians to the people of Pakistan, who are suffering so badly and who will continue to suffer over the days, weeks and months ahead.

All speakers have recognized the terrible and enormous nature of this disaster and the magnitude of its effects. Those effects, as has been said, are likely to worsen. As I learned from Ambassador Haroon this morning, the unprecedented volume and — to use the word of the representative of France — "violence" of that flooding continues and will continue.

In these appalling circumstances, it is obvious, as we all recognize, that the generous support of the international community is crucial to meet three needs: the urgent, immediate humanitarian needs of the Pakistani people; Pakistan's rebuilding in the short term after the floods; and then, of course, the longer-term economic prosperity and stability of that country.

On Tuesday this week, conscious of the appeal by the United Nations and the Government of Pakistan for further assistance, Australian Prime Minister Gillard announced that Australia would increase its contribution to the humanitarian effort by a further $24 million, bringing Australia's total commitment so far to $35 million. Including in that amount is $22 million through United Nations agencies and $1 million in relief supplies airlifted by the Australian Defence Forces.

Beyond the immediate needs, as I have indicated, it is of course essential that the international community commit itself to supporting Pakistan for the longer term. When the present flood water recede, we know that the crisis will, terribly, continue, and that the economic, social and environmental effects will be felt for years to come. While meeting emergency needs is obviously a first priority, planning and strategic assessments for longer-term rehabilitation will be decisive for Pakistan's recovery after the floods.

We welcome the Government of Pakistan's commissioning of the World Bank and Asian Development Bank to develop a damage and needs assessment. That assessment obviously needs to be thorough and to translate very quickly into action plans.

We also welcome the Pakistan Government's intention to reconvene the Pakistan Development Forum in the near future. For the Forum to be most effective, we suggest it draw on the outcomes of the damage and needs assessment and have an agenda that builds a genuine partnership between the Government of Pakistan and the international community throughout the flood crisis and the years of rebuilding to come. An important role for the Forum will be to include policy dialogue on development challenges and economic reform.

Australia will continue to work with the Government of Pakistan and the international community to support the people of Pakistan to address their human, economic, security and development challenges in this immediate crisis and, we commit, over the longer term into the future. All members of the international community must do what we can to help in these extraordinary and unprecedented circumstances.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mrs. Dunlop (Brazil): Brazil welcomes the initiative of the President of the General Assembly to convene the Assembly to consider the humanitarian emergency resulting from the floods that are afflicting Pakistan. It is noteworthy that as we hold events to mark the second World Humanitarian Day, the importance of the work of humanitarian actors has been made painfully clear by this disaster.

We are struck by the unprecedented scale of this calamity, particularly as the floods continue to swell and as more rains are expected in the coming weeks. Brazil welcomes the efforts by the Government of

Pakistan to face this challenge, while recognizing that the unforeseeable dimensions of the floods impose limits on national capacities to fully respond to the aftermath of the disaster. The international community must therefore provide assistance to the victims of the floods in Pakistan. The humanitarian response must address both the immediate life-saving needs and the long-term recovery and reconstruction needs in the affected regions. This calls for scaling up the support provided so far. It also warrants continued engagement from the international community in order to ensure a smooth transition from relief to rehabilitation and development.

We note with satisfaction the initial response provided by the United Nations system. Brazil is also pleased to see that donors are stepping up their contributions. Yet, more is required if we are to face the challenges posed by the floods in Pakistan in a timely manner. We thus urge all those in a position to do so to contribute within their capacity to the international efforts in support of the Government of Pakistan.

In solidarity with the Pakistani people, Brazil has contributed $1 million to the relief efforts, channelled through the World Food Programme and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Our contribution aims at enabling the acquisition of goods according to the priorities of the Pakistani Government, in order to address the food, shelter, clothing and health needs of vulnerable populations. We are also supporting the setting up of temporary educational facilities for internally displaced persons and refugees, as well as the implementation of quick-impact projects aimed at recovery of educational infrastructure damaged by the floods.

We would like to highlight in this context the positive contribution made by schools to prevention, alertness, response and recovery efforts in relation to humanitarian emergencies. The humanitarian assistance provided by Brazil takes into account the needs of students affected by disasters by supplying food, educational material and school tents so as to contribute to continuing educational activities and to a rapid return to normal work conditions. It is paramount to ensure the realization of the right to education in emergency situations.

In its provision of humanitarian assistance, Brazil is guided by the humanitarian principles of humanity, impartiality, neutrality and independence and relevant General Assembly resolutions, particularly resolution 46/182, as well as by the principles of sovereignty, non-intervention and international cooperation.

Finally, we welcome the adoption of the resolution entitled "Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the wake of devastating floods in Pakistan" (resolution 64/294). It is a clear sign of the political will of all Governments to come to the assistance of those in need. It is now time for us to walk the walk and ensure that this political will materializes in concrete assistance to the millions of people affected by the floods.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mr. Núñez Mosquera (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): First of all, Cuba would like to express its condolences to the victims of the serious disaster which recently occurred in Pakistan as a result of intense rain which has caused the heaviest flooding of the past 80 years. This has affected nearly the entire territory of that brotherly nation. The extent of the catastrophe can be seen in the 1,600 people who have lost their lives and more than 20 million who have been affected by the disaster, among whom 3.5 million children who risk contracting serious diseases. According to reports, many more of our Pakistani brethren could lose their lives if the international community does not immediately offer the assistance required.

Cuba, a small developing country, has contributed modestly towards assistance for many countries affected by disasters. A few years ago, we worked together with the people of Pakistan when the earthquake affected that country. As a result of that cooperation, more than 900 Pakistani young people are being trained today as physicians in Cuban universities. We will continue, within our capacity, to provide the support that is our main wealth: the human capital created by the revolution and by our best experiences.

We regret the loss of lives and the material damage caused by climatic events that have affected thousands of people around the world, in particular in countries of the South. Here, we reaffirm the importance of meeting official development assistance commitments and promoting United Nations

programmes intended to effectively support the efforts of national authorities in developing countries.

Increasingly, we see with concern the consequences of climate change and ecological imbalance, which are causing an increasing number of natural disasters and humanitarian emergencies in various parts of the world. Hence the importance of working quickly to achieve a more ambitious climate change agreement, which would safeguard the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and its Kyoto Protocol and which would take into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

Cuba considers it extremely important to continue to strengthen the leadership and influence of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction as the coordinating body for international efforts. Likewise, we are committed to continue to cooperate with the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination Team. We underscore the importance of international cooperation in the area of humanitarian assistance and reiterate the role of the State in initiating, organizing, coordinating and providing humanitarian assistance within its territory when a country has been affected by a natural disaster, in line with General Assembly resolutions and the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015.

Cuba reaffirms that humanitarian assistance must be delivered with full respect for the guiding principles recognized in resolution 46/182 and rejects the imposition of vague concepts which could be easily manipulated to justify any action or to violate the principles of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. It is vital that States be the ones, in situations requiring humanitarian assistance, to request such assistance and provide their consent, in order to receive the assistance in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter without any distortion or conditionalities.

Cuba is a country that has been regularly affected by meteorological events, and we know through our own experience the serious human and material damage that can be caused by such climatic events. We would therefore like to express our sincere solidarity with Pakistan.

Its national authorities, in coordination with the United Nations, have identified the most immediate assistance priorities: the provision of food, drinking water and water purification, tents and medical services and restoring access by repairing damaged roads and transportation networks. They also note the importance of monitoring the sanitation situation to prevent any possible outbreak of water-borne diseases such as cholera or diarrhoea.

Furthermore, it is crucial to provide support to the Pakistani authorities to enable them to enter the recovery and reconstruction period as soon as possible. For our country, the only way of facing the devastating fury of nature is to use the resources of our planet in the service of those most affected, without recourse to petty commercial interests or national self-interest. Solidarity and international cooperation are required.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Kim Bonghyun (Republic of Korea): At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for convening these meetings on the tragic situation in Pakistan at this critical juncture. I commend his leadership in the adoption of resolution 64/294 in this regard, which we fully support.

Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's recent visit to Pakistan was timely. He has called the situation there unprecedented and heart-wrenching, and now is the time for the international community to respond swiftly to his pleas to help the people in the flood-stricken areas. I am sure that these meetings will be effective in mobilizing further support from the international community for the people in need.

The damage inflicted by the flood is vast and deep. One fifth of the country is under flood waters. The size of the affected area is similar to that of the Korean peninsula. The total damage has not yet been fully assessed, as the rains are continuing while the monsoon season sets in. The destruction of bridges and roads makes access for aid workers very difficult. Heavy damage to agricultural areas is an indicator that the consequences of this disaster may be long-lasting and severe.

In this regard, on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Korea, I express our deep sympathy and give our condolences to the victims of the floods and the Pakistani Government. We are profoundly saddened by the loss of life and the destruction of livelihoods

and communities. A huge number of people have died, including some whom I met personally when I served in Pakistan. I express my personal sympathy and condolences to their families.

The Government of the Republic of Korea has decided to contribute $1 million in kind, with shelter, food, water, sanitation facilities and medication. In addition to my Government's support, Korean civil society and the private sector, including non-governmental organizations and private corporations, have mobilized more than $674,000 for the relief effort. We will act quickly to make sure our help reaches people in need as soon as possible.

Our work in Pakistan has only just begun. The international community must realize the urgency of this crisis. The funding response is improving, but donors, Governments and the general public have not done enough to help Pakistan. We must act rapidly before the floods claim more victims.

Despite the magnitude of this tragedy, I would like to emphasize that our efforts can make a meaningful difference. But we must we act swiftly.

Lastly, I have faith that the Pakistani people have the strength to withstand this disaster. Together, we will repair the damage of the flood and rebuild Pakistan. The Government of the Republic of Korea is fully prepared to stand with the Pakistani people in coping with this disaster and in the process of rehabilitation and reconstruction, with the cooperation of the United Nations and the international community.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Kohona (Sri Lanka): My delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the President of the Assembly for initiating resolution 64/294, on the floods in Pakistan, which we have unanimously adopted, and for convening these plenary meetings. We also thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, Mr. Qureshi, for his presence at these meetings and for his detailed briefing (see A/64/PV.110). The updated information on the situation on the ground provided by the Secretary-General, including on the relief effort, is greatly appreciated by my delegation.

Sri Lanka wishes to join other members of the Assembly in conveying once again our deepest sympathy to the Government and the people of Pakistan on the tragic loss of life and the widespread devastation caused by the torrents of water that have flooded that ancient land. This is indeed an unprecedented and mind-numbing calamity, described by UNICEF as the biggest emergency on the planet today. We in Sri Lanka share the pain of the people of Pakistan.

My delegation also associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The President of Sri Lanka, His Excellency Mahinda Rajapaksa, contacted Prime Minister Gillani of Pakistan as soon as the news of the rising floodwaters ravaging Pakistan reached us and conveyed assurances of our strong solidarity with the efforts of the Government and the people of Pakistan to cope with the inundation of enormous stretches of heavily populated areas.

As a country that was devastated by the Indian Ocean tsunami five years ago and was readily assisted by the international community, we are able to fully empathize with the distress confronting the Government and people of Pakistan. We have no doubt, of course, that with the support of the international community and through its own national efforts, the Government of Pakistan will be able to provide relief for those affected by the disaster and to rebuild its country.

As a token of our support and solidarity, the Government of Sri Lanka dispatched a C-130 military aircraft with a consignment of essential food items on 8 August 2010. A 17-member Sri Lankan medical team is already tending to the victims. Sri Lanka remains fully prepared to extend any other form of assistance that the Government of Pakistan may require and will continue to support the work of the United Nations as a contributor to the Central Emergency Response Fund.

We also convey our appreciation to the Secretary-General for the leadership that he has demonstrated in ensuring that emergency relief reaches the victims without delay and for coordinating international support for long-term reconstruction and rehabilitation work in Pakistan. We note that the Secretary-General has travelled to Pakistan this week to see the devastation for himself and to see how international assistance can be further galvanized. We applaud the personal interest and commitment that he has shown in these trying circumstances.

This catastrophe brought about by unprecedented flooding appears to reflect a pattern of environmental disasters that have confronted the world in recent times. Worrying climatic phenomena, most likely caused by human activity, have become more frequent. Massive forest fires resulting from a prolonged heatwave and earlier destructive floods and mudslides elsewhere come to mind. The likelihood of such climate-related disasters occurring regularly has become an ever-present worry of many regions and countries. United Nations agencies may need to be revamped and reoriented to deal with these overwhelming climate-change-related challenges.

We also recognize the valuable role played by the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Sir John Holmes, the staff of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and United Nations agencies in coordinating and distributing emergency relief assistance.

My delegation would convey its appreciation to the President for providing us this opportunity to once again renew our commitment to support the people and the Government of Pakistan at this difficult time. My delegation joins other delegations in calling on the international community, particularly donor countries and international financial institutions, to extend further assistance to Pakistan, particularly assistance that complements Pakistan's own efforts, bearing in mind that this natural disaster is of unprecedented proportions and affects almost 20 million people. In this regard, we welcome the launch by the United Nations of the Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Shalgham (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset I would like to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening these meetings. Libya was among the first to call for this.

We wish to convey our sympathy and full solidarity to the Government and the people of Pakistan as they face the largest natural disaster in the history of their country. We reaffirm everything stated by the representative of Egypt on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

It has been widely reported that floods and mudslides in Pakistan have led to widespread death and destruction, the displacement of millions and untold damage to property. Everyone who has seen the damage realizes that this is one of the greatest disasters ever faced by humanity. The damage has exceeded that caused by other disasters. International institutions have been assessing the impact of this disaster. The International Monetary Fund has noted the major economic losses caused by flooding of agricultural land. Health experts have warned that major health crises could result from the floods. UNESCO has warned of flood damage to historic sites. These floods are but one example of the affects of climatic change over the past several years.

We have heard many appeals for accelerated relief to the millions of affected people, and we have affirmed the need to continue to provide assistance in the long term to rebuild flooded villages and infrastructure that has been completely destroyed. We must endeavour to address this disaster within the United Nations in the long and short term and based on the principles of international solidarity.

We are following with great concern the suffering of the Pakistani people. In the wake of the disaster, we have sent several relief flights laden with food, medicine and tents for those who have been affected. We will continue to provide such assistance in order to help rebuild disaster-affected areas.

I conclude by affirming that my country is confident that everyone will stand by the Pakistani people to assist them in recovering from this disaster.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mrs. Volken (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland thanks the President for convening these meetings. It almost goes without saying that we support resolution 64/294, which was adopted by the Assembly yesterday, and we thank the President for having undertaken that initiative. We share the feelings aroused by the catastrophic flooding in Pakistan and reaffirm our heartfelt sympathy for and solidarity with the victims of this disaster.

Switzerland commends the personal commitment of the Secretary-General and the actions already undertaken to help the millions of victims, including by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the World Food Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the

International Committee of the Red Cross and of course, by Member States and regional organizations.

Switzerland provided immediate financial support to humanitarian actors already present on the ground. It hurried to send additional personnel and it provided humanitarian equipment. More than $4 million have already been allocated in bilateral and multilateral aid. Additionally, the Swiss people will provide more than $15 million of private aid. To take two examples, Swiss humanitarian assistance has provided drinking water and other basic resources, including shelter materials, for 8,000 victims in the Swat valley. Further contributions, both financial and in-kind and the dispatch of additional experts is currently being considered.

Switzerland has been present in Pakistan since 1966, including in the affected areas, and will continue its efforts to contribute to rebuilding the country, rehabilitating the victims and preventing of such future disasters.

We hope that the international community will respond to the urgent appeals to help the victims and will support the Pakistani authorities and humanitarian actors. We also hope that international solidarity will provide Pakistan with the resources and expertise for reconstruction in the medium and long term.

Even before the disaster, this large country was already facing many challenges that were of concern to the whole region and to the entire international community. There is an urgent need today for humanitarian assistance; human security in all its aspects must remain a priority in Pakistan.

The extreme climatic events that we are experiencing today remind us that climate change remains one of the greatest challenges of the twenty-first century. It will result in uncontrollable risks and tragic damage if the entire international community does not respond resolutely. For that reason, Switzerland will spare no effort to ensure that the Climate Change Conference in Cancun will lead to concrete and substantive results.

Pakistan is today paying the heaviest imaginable price, with a devastating monsoon affecting a large swathe of Asia. Switzerland would like to concretely express its solidarity with the people and the authorities of Pakistan. We stand side by side with them, their families, mothers and fathers, and especially the children of Pakistan.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Russian Federation.

Mr. Churkin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation associates itself with the condolences extended to the Government and the people of Pakistan.

In the Russian Federation, the news of the numerous casualties and destruction caused by the widespread flooding in Pakistan was received with a feeling of mourning and great compassion. On 2 August, expressions of sympathy and support for the relatives and friends of those who have died and for those who have suffered as a result of this natural disaster were voiced by President Dmitry Medvedev in a communication to the leadership of Pakistan. During the meeting that was held on 18 August in Sochi, the President of Russia assured the President Asif Ali Zardari of Pakistan that our country is ready to provide his country with all possible assistance to mitigate the consequences of the flooding.

Our specialized agencies are in constant contact. Russia has already provided emergency bilateral assistance to Pakistan totalling $1 million. Two Il-76 flights to Islamabad carried 73 tons of humanitarian goods, including tents, blankets, food, generators and other essential goods. Currently, the Government of the Russian Federation is considering the United Nations urgent humanitarian appeal with a view to making contributions to United Nations funds, including the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization and UNICEF.

We support the leading role of the United Nations in providing further humanitarian operations in Pakistan. The decision of the Secretary-General to allocate additional resources from the United Nations Central Emergency Relief Fund is, in our view, fully justified. We note the swiftness of the work of United Nations agencies, headed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in preparing the urgent humanitarian appeal.

In Pakistan, the international community and the United Nations have come up against a serious challenge. The unprecedented scale of the disaster, the sheer number of casualties and the destruction of infrastructure have all led to difficulties in the timely

delivery and distribution of humanitarian assistance, about which members know. Past experience in conducting humanitarian operations in Pakistan provides us with a good opportunity, within the framework of the United Nations, to discuss the cohesion, timeliness and appropriateness of the global response to similar emergency humanitarian situations.

In the light of the increase in the number and scale of natural disasters, such a discussion is most timely. Its focus, in our view, should be support for the central role of the United Nations, its institutions and its instruments in an international humanitarian response and respect for the fundamental principles of the provision of humanitarian assistance.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Al Habib (Islamic Republic of Iran): Let me first express our condolences and convey the sincere empathy of my Government to the people and the Government of Pakistan for the loss of life and the suffering caused by recent events in the country.

I wish to thank His Excellency Mr. Ali Treki, President of the General Assembly, His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for all their efforts, for this timely plenary meeting of the General Assembly and for the earlier flash appeal in response to the humanitarian consequences of the devastating floods in our brotherly country of Pakistan. The consensus achieved in adopting resolution 64/294, considering the humanitarian situation resulting from the floods in Pakistan, is another step in strengthening emergency relief and rehabilitation efforts in the wake of the devastating floods in that country.

Since the very first days of the current disaster, the Islamic Republic of Iran has summoned all its capacity to come to the assistance of our sisters and brothers in Pakistan by mobilizing both governmental and non-governmental organizations, as well as individuals. President Ahmadinejad has issued a special decree to follow up on the critical situation and is in direct contact with the highest officials in the brotherly country of Pakistan. The preliminary budget allocation of $5 million has been doubled, with a ceiling of $10 million, in order to address the urgent requirements of those in need.

As of now, three cargo planes and four heavy trailers have dispatched more than 200 tons of foodstuffs, medical supplies and other humanitarian assistance, and more is on the way. Religious leaders all over the country are providing special assistance through the mosques and other active humanitarian civil society institutions. The current situation has been discussed in the parliament, and a parliamentary delegation has been convened to follow up on the situation.

The Iranian Red Crescent Society and the Emergency Aid Committee of the late Imam Khomeini have actively embarked on this path of help by mobilizing all they could. Both of these institutions have constructive relations with the Pakistan Red Crescent Society, providing medical supplies and arranging for medical teams and other humanitarian support.

In fact, crisis management, cooperation at the strategic level and coordination are all essential parts of the job ahead of us. They must be comprehensively followed up to the last detail through international cooperation in order to provide effective humanitarian assistance to the people and the Government of Pakistan, which have suffered exceptionally great destruction due to the floods. The Iranian embassy in Islamabad and our consulates general in the country are ready to facilitate delivery of the necessary assistance to the people and the Government of Pakistan.

Finally, we stand firm with the people and the Government of Pakistan and wish to offer our full support and renewed determination to help Pakistan at this difficult moment to recover, be rehabilitated and rise from this terrible disaster to the bright future it deserves.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to express our condolences to the people and the Government of Pakistan. I associate myself with the statements made on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Non-Aligned Movement and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. I would also like to express my appreciation to His Excellency the President of the General Assembly for convening these important meetings and to the Secretary-General for his briefing on his recent visit to Pakistan in the wake of the disaster that befell that

friendly country. I would also like to commend the concrete efforts of the United Nations and the international community in helping the people of Pakistan in the aftermath of the disaster that Pakistan has been facing since the beginning of this month. Those efforts have been made by charitable organizations, Member States and the United Nations.

Such a response from all segments of the international community and its institutions is indeed commendable. However, the scale and breadth of the destruction at the humanitarian, environmental and economic levels — which some estimates indicate will exceed the impact of the tsunami disaster — requires further efforts by the international community. We therefore hope that the present meetings will chart a common path to help the people of Pakistan, 20 million of whom are reported to be displaced.

Under the leadership of His Highness Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani, Emir of the State of Qatar, my country was among the first to send aid to address the immediate effects of the disaster following news of the floods. Currently, Qatar plans to provide assistance for the recovery, reconstruction and development phases. That is a reflection of our country's desire to provide humanitarian assistance to Pakistan, which is a friendly country whose stability is extremely important for the entire region.

The assistance provided by the State of Qatar is not confined to Government assistance. My country's non-governmental and charitable organizations have also launched fund-raising campaigns that have raised more than $2 million. That reflects the sincere humanitarian solidarity of the people of Qatar who, like other peoples of the world, have stepped forward to help the people of Pakistan.

The State of Qatar is at the forefront in contributing humanitarian aid and support, both financial and in kind, to respond to disasters all over the world, especially those afflicting developing countries. Our contributions are made through United Nations funds and programmes. We therefore call upon all Member States to respond to the appeal launched by Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance and provide support to the Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan.

The severity and cruelty of natural disasters have increased in recent years, becoming more diverse and multidimensional. A feature of natural disasters is that they strike indiscriminately and have an impact on all types of people, as well as on the environment and the economy, thereby creating havoc in the international community. It is therefore important to develop a mechanism under the United Nations umbrella to stand ready to deal with natural disasters. Such a mechanism should be of a scale, and have the same readiness as, United Nations peacekeeping forces. Of course, the nature of its mandate and the readiness and training of its personnel would be different, enabling them to address the consequences of natural disasters. In that regard, I would like to mention the State of Qatar's proposal for a global humanitarian operation force. We will work with our partners to further define it, for the benefit of the international community.

We hope that the United Nations will be able to assess the situation in Pakistan accurately, fairly and on the basis of the immediate needs of the affected population. We also note that there is a need to stand by the Government of Pakistan, which is bearing the repercussions of this disaster. In that regard, we count on the efforts of Mr. Jean-Maurice Ripert, United Nations Special Envoy for Assistance to Pakistan.

In conclusion, we stand with the people and Government of Pakistan. We will continue to support Pakistan until it recovers from this crisis. We also support resolution 64/294, entitled "Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the wake of devastating floods in Pakistan".

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): Let me begin by thanking the President for his personal initiative in organizing these meetings and proposing resolution 64/294 for focused action by the international community on the humanitarian situation arising from the floods in Pakistan.

As we commemorated World Humanitarian Day yesterday, Pakistan and the international community confronted another calamity, one of the biggest natural calamities of recent times. I would like to express deep appreciation for the Secretary-General's initiative to visit the flood-ravaged areas of Pakistan and for his strenuous efforts to mobilize international assistance for Pakistan at this time of need. The high-level participation that we have witnessed at these meetings is testimony to the solidarity and commitment of the

international community to be there when one of our Member States requires help.

India and Pakistan share the same history, topography and land mass and the river systems that irrigate both sides of the border. Our region is prone to natural disasters. In our region, the vagaries of nature continue to take a heavy toll in human lives and material losses. We are familiar with the devastation and human suffering they cause and the trauma they leave behind long after their initial impact. However, in this particular case, the widespread devastation is unprecedented; its like has never, ever been witnessed in recent history. Even some parts of India bordering Pakistan have been affected by the floods.

Therefore, kindly allow me to convey to the people and the Government of Pakistan the heartfelt condolences of the people and the Government of India on the lives that have been tragically lost in this disaster. Kindly also allow me to convey the deepest sympathy of the people and the Government of India for those who have been injured and traumatized by this calamity and for the material losses that the people and the country have suffered. Our hearts and our prayers are with the near and dear of those who have died and those who have suffered and continue to suffer. We share the pain and agony and fully understand the trauma and suffering that our Pakistani brethren are living through.

Even as we meet today, the humanitarian catastrophe is still unfolding. The extent of the devastation is unparalleled. Over 10 per cent of the country's entire population has been affected and there has been extensive damage to livestock, crops and infrastructure. The magnitude of the tragedy makes it incumbent on the international community to pool its energies and resources to assist Pakistan in its efforts to rebuild and rehabilitate the devastated region.

As a member of the international community and, more significantly, as a close neighbour, India recognizes its responsibility in contributing to this global effort to extend its support to Pakistan in its hour of need. We cannot remain unaffected by this humanitarian catastrophe. We are willing to do all that is in our power to assist Pakistan in facing the consequences of the floods. We extend our wholehearted support to the Government of Pakistan in its efforts at relief and rehabilitation of the adversely affected population.

Our Prime Minister, Mr. Manmohan Singh, called his counterpart from Pakistan yesterday. Our External Affairs Minister, Mr. S.M. Krishna, also spoke earlier with the Foreign Minister of Pakistan and expressed our sorrow and condolences to that country. As a gesture of our solidarity and sympathy, we have offered $5 million in assistance, in the first instance, for the provision of relief supplies from India, to be prioritized by the Government of Pakistan in its battle to respond to the crisis. We have offered that relief supplies could be handed over to the Pakistani authorities at the border for further distribution by them. Given our geographical proximity, the provision of relief supplies from India would save precious time and provide much-needed relief to flood victims at the earliest possible time. It is our expectation that relief supplies will start moving very shortly.

Our Prime Minister has also said that the Government of India is ready to do more to assist in the relief effort. He has also underscored that all of South Asia should rise to the occasion and extend every possible help to the people of Pakistan affected by the tragedy. As and when Pakistan is able to articulate its requirements for medium- to long-term recovery, we will, within our abilities and in accordance with the needs of Pakistan, be privileged to be of assistance.

While national authorities are, and should be, at the forefront of the humanitarian response, international solidarity and assistance guided by humanitarian principles can play a key role. We believe that the United Nations should coordinate humanitarian assistance so that it is channelled according to national priorities. The present meetings should therefore provide a vital input in developing the international community's response framework to the situation that is unfolding.

Before I conclude, I reiterate India's willingness and readiness to contribute to this global effort. What Pakistan needs today is the sustained and long-term commitment of the international community to provide relief and rehabilitation to the affected population. I am confident that the international community will not be found wanting in its support for the Government of Pakistan in its relief and rehabilitation efforts. I have no doubt that the people of Pakistan have the strength and resilience to overcome this natural disaster.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Thailand.

Mr. Sinhaseni (Thailand): At the outset, let me congratulate the President of the General Assembly on his initiative to convene these timely meetings of the Assembly and on the adoption of resolution 64/294, which urges the international community to provide assistance to Pakistan. As Thailand's Prime Minister, Abhisit Vejjajiva, expressed in his letter to Prime Minister Gillani of Pakistan earlier this month, Thailand joins others in offering our profound condolences and sympathy to the families of the victims of the devastating monsoon floods.

In the early days of the devastation, Thailand reached out with an initial pledge of $75,000 in humanitarian aid. We continue to monitor the unfolding humanitarian situation in close consultation with the Government of Pakistan. Thailand's Ministries of Health and Defence, the Royal Thai Army and the Thai Red Cross are currently coordinating to dispatch such needed items as medicine and hygiene kits to the value of $150,000. In the coming days, the Thai Foreign Ministry will be meeting with the Thai private sector, in particular Thais of Pakistani descent, to further mobilize support for the people of Pakistan.

In that connection, my delegation wishes to thank Foreign Minister Qureshi for the up-to-date information on the current humanitarian situation in Pakistan, which detailed specific needs for relief and rehabilitation. Our gratitude also goes to the Secretary-General for his briefing and to Sir John Holmes and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs for coordinating humanitarian efforts and for updating us regularly on what is happening on the ground and what types of assistance are required.

Yesterday, we commemorated the second World Humanitarian Day. It was fitting that that day was chosen for the United Nations to show its solidarity with Pakistan and, even more touching, that our expressions of support have spilled over to today. Thailand intends to continue to work closely with the Government and the people of Pakistan, through all channels possible, to help see them through these difficult times.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Saudi Arabia.

Mr. Al Oyaidi (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): It is my pleasure to extend our gratitude to the President of the General Assembly for convening these meetings of the Assembly to consider humanitarian assistance for the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. At the outset, allow me to express our most heartfelt condolences to the people and the Government of Pakistan. We assure them that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia stands in solidarity with them.

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is experiencing the worst flood disaster in its recent history, with more than 20 million people displaced. The flooding has destroyed vast areas of agricultural land, as well as roads, bridges, houses and schools. Electricity, communications and drinking water infrastructure, which have also been affected, will take a long time to repair and rebuild.

As soon as he learned news of the disaster, King Abdullah Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, directed the establishment of an airlift between Saudi Arabia and Pakistan — which to date has included 22 aircraft — to dispatch emergency relief assistance to the people of Pakistan. That assistance has included food supplies, blankets, electrical generators, tents, drinking water, medical supplies and teams of doctors and nurses to ease the suffering of the brotherly people of Pakistan.

In addition, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques has launched a campaign to support the people of Pakistan. The entire Saudi people, including corporations, have responded to the call and have provided assistance that today exceeds $106 million. That is in addition to the in-kind assistance that has been airlifted, which exceeds $70 million in value. The airlift is continuing. We are also helping to distribute relief assistance.

In addition to that assistance, in coordination with United Nations agencies operating in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia has decided to expedite the disbursement of $100 million for emergency and humanitarian assistance to help those affected by natural disasters in Pakistan.

In conclusion, as in the past, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia will spare no effort in supporting sisterly Pakistan to overcome this difficult ordeal. The assistance that the Kingdom will continue to provide to Pakistan and all other vulnerable countries reflects the vision of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques that

we all are brothers in one human family. In that spirit, we urge other States to extend assistance Pakistan. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia supports resolution 64/294, entitled "Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the wake of devastating floods in Pakistan".

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. Momen (Bangladesh): Let me begin by thanking the President of the General Assembly for scheduling these very important and timely plenary meetings. These two days of discussion, which began yesterday, 19 August, on World Humanitarian Day, are the right occasion to pledge ourselves to the cause of humanity and the suffering of the flood-affected people of Pakistan. Allow me also to express our sincere thanks to the Secretary-General for his sincere appeal and comprehensive briefing. My delegation also commends Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Mr. Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi, for his statement providing an update on the current flood situation in Pakistan and its ramifications for the development, peace and security of the region in particular, and of the world in general.

I also wish to state that the Bangladesh delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Egypt, Yemen and Tajikistan on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and China and the Organization of the Islamic Conference respectively. In addition, I wish to briefly make several points that Bangladesh believes to be of importance.

I take the floor today against the backdrop of a severe flood that has caused extensive damage in Pakistan. Coming from Bangladesh, a country that frequently experiences such disasters, we share the pain of the people of Pakistan. Our sympathy therefore goes out to the affected people of Pakistan. I understand that this devastating flood in Pakistan has affected about 20 million people and left more than 2,000 dead. More people are likely to be affected as water continues to move towards densely populated areas. The flood victims are now in dire need of food, drinking water, shelter and medicine to prevent diseases.

This unprecedented flooding in a country like Pakistan has occurred in areas that I visited years ago and never thought would experience devastating floods. As I understand it, this is the worst flooding in 90 years. Recent experience of floods, earthquakes, mud slides, fires and tsunamis — for example in Pakistan, India, China, Bangladesh and East Asia — and wildfires in Russia, the United States and other countries, illustrate the vulnerability of the global community to the adverse effects of climate change.

They also show that the world now faces more frequent natural disasters of greater magnitude that cannot be tackled by a single country alone. Instead of a piecemeal and reactive approach, it is time for the global leadership to move decisively to face challenges and take proactive and comprehensive initiatives in the area of climate change. The current situation in Pakistan in particular makes a strong case for the early conclusion of the climate change negotiations. We cannot afford to fail humankind.

At this critical time, my delegation expresses the support, solidarity and sympathy of the Government and the people of Bangladesh to the Government and the people of Pakistan. Our Prime Minister, Sheikh Hasina, has already conveyed our sympathy to the Prime Minister of Pakistan. In addition, Bangladesh has already committed $2 million worth of emergency relief materials to Pakistan to address the devastating flood. Bangladesh is also sending relief materials such as tents, blankets, life-saving medicines, vaccines, oral saline solution, hygiene kits, water-purification tablets, mineral water, biscuits and packaged dry food. In addition, a medical team from Bangladesh is on its way to Pakistan to assist the flood-stricken people there.

As President of the UNICEF Executive Board, I am satisfied that, along with other agencies, UNICEF is fully involved in the humanitarian operation that is being conducted under the leadership of the Government of Pakistan. In addition, I am pleased to announce that on the opening day of its forthcoming meeting, on 7 September, the Executive Board will provide a forum for Pakistan to speak on the humanitarian crisis caused by the severe floods and, in particular, the effects on children.

We in Bangladesh are experiencing erratic patterns of flooding and drought that are a direct offshoot of climate change. Just three years ago, in November 2007, cyclone Sidr struck Bangladesh, in particular its southern-western districts, with the severity of a full-blown category-4 hurricane. It affected more than 27 million people and was one of

the top 10 fiercest cyclones recorded in the past 137 years. Similarly, cyclone Aila also hit Bangladesh last year with similar ferocity, causing enormous damage. However, we survived those disasters thanks to international assistance and cooperation, our sound disaster management system and the resilience of our people. We are thankful to all the countries, organizations and entities that stepped forward with material and moral assistance in our time of great difficulty.

May I place on record here that the extensive preparations and timely action of our Government and people, along with international agencies that worked together, which was unreservedly appreciated by many, were instrumental in avoiding a larger catastrophe. However, the lesson learned is that final disbursement by our partners at times does not match initial financial pledges. That creates an additional burden on the people and delays the Government's efforts to mitigate their grievances and needs.

Pakistan will now probably need non-food items as well as food, nutrition, water and sanitation, shelter and disease surveillance. The longer-term perspective calls for disaster risk reduction while addressing needs for the rehabilitation of livelihoods, infrastructure, health and educational services and increased shelter capacity. I call upon the international community, national Governments, the private sector, business leaders and individuals to come forward to assist the flood-affected people of Pakistan to ameliorate their pain and save their lives.

I hope that the appeal launched by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance to raise $460 million will continue to receive strong support from Member States in terms of greater political support and increased resource flows — most important, delivered in a timely manner.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to express our gratitude for the initiative of Assembly President Treki to convene these special meetings beginning yesterday, International Humanitarian Day, on the humanitarian consequences of the catastrophe being experienced by Pakistan. We also thank him for his initiative in submitting to us resolution 64/294, which we adopted yesterday by consensus.

We would also like to express our gratitude for the valuable information provided by the Secretary-General following his visit to Pakistan, as well as that regularly provided to us by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA). We are particularly grateful for the moving testimony of Pakistan's Minister for Foreign Affairs in connection with that country's current serious catastrophe.

I should like to express the deep concern of Spain's people and leaders in connection with the recent floods throughout a large part of Pakistan's territory. We are also very concerned about the tragic humanitarian situation being experienced by the people, the risk that it may worsen and, in particular, the loss of human life. In this regard, we associate ourselves with the message of solidarity and support delivered yesterday by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium on behalf of the European Union.

For its part, Spain has responded from the outset by contributing to international efforts to meet the immediate emergency assistance needs. Spain made an initial direct delivery of emergency humanitarian supplies on 4 August, which has since been followed by others, including a flight that left yesterday. We also began making disbursements for emergency food aid, which were stepped up following OCHA's launch of the Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan last week.

Overall, Spain has thus far contributed almost €6 million, which is being distributed through direct shipments of humanitarian aid and through disbursements to the World Food Programme, UNICEF and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. All of this is quite apart from the regular contributions Spain makes to the Central Emergency Response Fund, which has also been active since Pakistan was hit by the present crisis.

I can now announce that Spain's contribution to the international emergency response effort will increase to a total of €11 million in the coming days. With this response, Spain is seeking to meet some of the priority needs that have been identified by the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations, namely the provision of drinking water and food for the affected population, as well as the protection of the most vulnerable, especially children.

At the same time, we have placed priority on the effective and coordinated delivery of our assistance,

opting therefore for the multilateral track. We are channelling more than 90 per cent of our assistance through United Nations agencies and under the auspices of the appeal issued by OCHA as the leading body for the coordination of international humanitarian assistance. Our response will continue to evolve as we obtain a more precise assessment of the scope of the damage and the needs of the population and the priorities established by the Pakistani authorities, both in the immediate emergency phase as well as the subsequent recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction phases.

I should like to reiterate our message of full support for and solidarity with the people of Pakistan and to repeat that we stand fully ready to work in a coordinated way and to assist in the emergency assistance tasks being carried out by the international community under the coordination of the United Nations and in close cooperation with the Pakistani authorities.

Spain is committed to the stability and security of Pakistan now and in the medium and long term, and we will actively participate in the efforts that will be developed over the weeks and months to come with those objectives in mind, both within the framework of the European Union as well as at the regional and global levels.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Malta.

Mr. Borg (Malta): Malta would like to associate itself with the statement delivered yesterday by His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Belgium on behalf of the European Union member States.

Malta would like to extend its deepest sympathy and sincere condolences to the Government and the people of Pakistan as well as to the families and relatives of the victims of the devastating floods in that country. Malta expresses its solidarity with the people and the Government of Pakistan during this time of humanitarian crisis.

My delegation would also like to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan for his briefing, which enables us to understand better the challenges his country continues to face and the suffering of the afflicted Pakistani population. Malta echoes his appeal and his call for the international community to extend its generous support in overcoming this serious calamity of catastrophic proportions.

At the same time, my delegation would like to take this opportunity to highly commend both the Government of Pakistan and the United Nations through the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) for the immediate and rapid response undertaken to alleviate the tragic consequences of this disaster, in particular by the launching on 11 August of the Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan.

In solidarity with the people and the Government of Pakistan, the Government of Malta has decided to allocate a financial contribution of €10,000 to OCHA's Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Kleib (Indonesia): I should like once again, on behalf of the Government and the people of Indonesia, to extend my deepest condolences and sympathy to the Government and the people of Pakistan for the loss of hundreds of lives and the extensive infrastructure and property damage caused by one of the worst floods in history.

My delegation wishes to thank the President of the General Assembly for having convened these important meetings and for his statement at the 110th meeting. We should also like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

Indonesia extends its deepest appreciation to United Nations entities for their tireless efforts in assisting and alleviating the suffering of the victims. We also wish to acknowledge the presence of the Foreign Minister of Pakistan at this very important gathering and to thank him for his comprehensive briefing on the current situation.

Indonesia associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of Islamic Conference and the Asian Group.

Looking at Pakistan today, I am reminded of the situation in my country when Indonesia was hit by a tsunami in 2004. It was considered an unprecedented natural disaster for humanity. We therefore fully understand that the present situation in Pakistan is truly devastating. The scale of the disaster is so large that so

many people in so many places are in so much need. No country can handle such a situation alone. The world should be united. This is the right time to show our solidarity. We need to focus our attention on immediate assistance to prevent the second wave of death caused by water-borne diseases and food shortages. On top of that, Pakistan will also need medium- and long-term assistance for its reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts.

In solidarity with the Government and the people of Pakistan, the Government of Indonesia sent a cargo flight of humanitarian assistance supplies on 7 August. The supplies include: tents, beds, electrical generator units, medicines, tons of food and supplies for infants and babies, with a total value of $1 million.

Finally, let me reiterate that Indonesia will continue to work with and stand behind international relief efforts to assist the Government and people of Pakistan.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Cavanagh (New Zealand): I would like to begin by offering condolences from the people of New Zealand to the people of Pakistan. We have been shocked by the severity of the flooding and deeply saddened by the unprecedented losses to life, livelihoods and the environment. We are aware that this is the middle of the monsoon season and that the flooding could continue. It is tragic that the rains that might have brought life-giving relief to such an arid region have had such devastating consequences.

The humanitarian and reconstruction challenge ahead for Pakistan and the international community is of an unprecedented scale. That the people of Pakistan are suffering once again, only five years after the massive earthquake in 2005, only intensifies the tragedy. The humanitarian and reconstruction challenge ahead for Pakistan and the international community is of an unprecedented scale. New Zealand stands alongside others in the international community, ready to assist Pakistan with the huge task ahead.

Within days of the tragedy unfolding, New Zealand contributed $2 million to the relief effort, to be channelled primarily through UNICEF and the Red Cross, but also through non-governmental organizations with strong ties to the community. Today I am please to announce that the New Zealand Government has doubled the initial contribution and has committed a further $2 million in support of the humanitarian relief efforts in Pakistan, bringing New Zealand's total contribution, so far, to $4 million. Today's additional $2 million contribution will be channelled through the Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan, managed by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. The New Zealand funding is not earmarked, in order to provide greatest flexibility for agencies to respond as required.

Finally, New Zealand would like to also offer its support for the tremendous efforts undertaken by those involved so far in the relief effort in extraordinarily difficult circumstances.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Croatia.

Mr. Mikec (Croatia): On behalf of the Republic of Croatia and its people, I should like to express our deepest condolences and sympathy to the people and the Government of Pakistan on the immense loss of life and widespread devastation resulting from the catastrophic monsoon rains affecting millions of people in Pakistan. The scale of the natural devastation and destruction that has displaced millions and caused enormous damage to crops, livestock and infrastructure seems at the moment to indicate an insurmountable calamity.

Assistance is a matter of the utmost urgency, and we therefore appreciate the prompt reaction of the United Nations, other relevant international organizations, non-governmental organizations and the whole international community in providing it.

I would like to commend the President of the General Assembly for having convened these timely meetings. We also welcome the adoption of resolution 64/294, on humanitarian and disaster relief assistance for Pakistan, as well as the launching of the Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan. Natural disasters such as this one further accentuate the role and importance of United Nations humanitarian assistance efforts.

Croatia extends its wholehearted support to the Government and the people of Pakistan, and is joining the international community in providing assistance. Thus, the Croatian Government has decided to donate, through the Croatian Red Cross, 1 million kunas —

around $180,000 — for assistance to the victims of the floods.

Let me reiterate once again our solidarity with the Pakistani people, in the hope that, with help from all of us, they will overcome these difficult times and successfully recover. We call upon Member States and the international community to further support the efforts of the Government and the people of Pakistan. Our thoughts will remain with the many millions of people affected by this tragedy.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Kuwait.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): We thank the President of the General Assembly for having convened these meetings to demonstrate the solidarity of the international community with Pakistan at a time when they have great need of our solidarity in the face of the destructive flooding in their country. We welcome yesterday's most timely adoption of resolution 64/294.

We pay tribute to the Secretary-General for his efforts and to United Nations specialized agencies for their action to provide emergency humanitarian assistance and to coordinate its delivery with the Pakistani Government.

Once more we convey our condolences to Pakistan and its people and our solidarity with them with respect to this disaster, which has caused great loss of life and material damage. It is the policy of State of Kuwait to respond to humanitarian appeals, and last week we decided to make a contribution of $5 million. But in the light of the severity of the disaster, His Highness Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Emir of Kuwait, subsequently decided to double this contribution to $10 million. The Kuwaiti Red Crescent, in coordination with our Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is ensuring the delivery of humanitarian assistance on Kuwaiti aeroplanes, whose flights to Pakistan with emergency cargo have begun. Ten per cent of the total sum will be allocated to United Nations agencies with teams on the ground working to provide humanitarian assistance to Pakistan.

A campaign to collect donations is also under way; in coming days civil society institutions and public and private sector groups will participate. So far, more than $2 million in contributions have been announced.

We have been in contact with the Pakistan Ministry of Foreign Affairs. All that has been said yesterday and today, we reiterate to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, so that he can return home with the clear message that the friends of Pakistan will not be mere observers: the international community will assist in any way it can. This is a moral and humanitarian responsibility, and all of us must take part in rebuilding all that the floods have destroyed.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Serbia.

Ms. Ivanović (Serbia): At the outset let me express, on behalf of my Government and the people of Serbia, our heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims of the devastating floods in Pakistan and our friendship and solidarity with the Government and the people of Pakistan. The scale of a disaster that has caused a heavy loss of life, displacement and damage to homes and livelihoods, environment and infrastructure deserves a prompt and decisive reaction from the international community.

In that respect, I should like to praise His Excellency Mr. Ali Treki for his initiative to convene these important meetings, which have resulted in the adoption of resolution 64/294, expressing the commitment of United Nations Member States to bring adequate and timely help to those most in need in Pakistan.

Like many of the Governments whose representatives delivered statements yesterday and today, the Serbian Government recently adopted a decision on providing urgent humanitarian assistance to Pakistan. We shall soon be in a position to provide information on the level and form of the assistance to be sent to Pakistan and we shall do our utmost to deliver it as soon as possible. This meeting and the detailed presentation made yesterday by His Excellency Mr. Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Foreign Minister of Pakistan (see A/64/PV.110) will surely help us in determining what kind of assistance will be most appropriate to the current humanitarian situation.

It is significant that yesterday we commemorated World Humanitarian Day, paying tribute to the thousands of humanitarian workers who have lost their

lives while performing their noble duties of helping people worldwide in very dire circumstances, as well as all those dedicated humanitarian workers currently in the field who spare no effort in helping vulnerable populations around the globe. In order to enable them to carry out their activities, it is our shared responsibility to act in a timely manner and provide adequate assistance whenever and wherever humanitarian emergencies occur. We are convinced that these meetings will contribute to that aim.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Afghanistan.

Mr. Tanin (Afghanistan): I would like to convey the deepest condolences of the Government and the people of Afghanistan to the Government and the people of Pakistan, our neighbours, for their loss during this tragedy, and to express our full solidarity with them as they recover and rebuild in the coming months and years.

The United Nations as an organization reminds us constantly that we do not exist in isolation. More than ever, we share the joy and pain of our fellow human beings. I want to assure the Pakistani people that they are not alone in this struggle and that the international community and this great Organization, including Afghanistan, are here to assist them. Afghanistan and Pakistan share a long border and common languages, religion, culture and history, and we acutely feel the pain and anguish of our brothers and sisters in Pakistan during this tragedy.

In this regard, I should like to welcome resolution 64/294 and encourage the international community to give generously in order to minimize the suffering of the Pakistani people and speed the recovery process. Afghanistan has already pledged $1 million in aid, despite our own difficult situation, and has sent four helicopters and more than 4 tons of medical supplies, along with 48 medical and humanitarian personnel. The international presence in Afghanistan, both the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), has also leapt to the assistance of the Pakistani people, both directly and by funnelling aid from outside. We will continue to work closely with our brothers and sisters in Pakistan to offer them a helping hand and a shoulder to lean on during this difficult time.

Thousands of Afghan refugees in Pakistan are also among those suffering, as three refugee camps have been largely destroyed, affecting more than 3,000 families. Our Consul General in Peshawar has already distributed 1,000 blankets, and is working closely with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to ensure that these families are cared for.

None of us can remain indifferent in the face of such destruction. More than 14 million people have lost their homes and their livelihoods, and many have lost their lives. We have a common responsibility, as human beings, to come together and assist the Government and the people of Pakistan however we can, so that this disaster will not result in further tragedy. It is our hope that the international community will demonstrate its solidarity with the people and the Government of Pakistan by responding promptly and generously to any request from Pakistan for assistance in their plight.

Again, I reiterate to the Pakistani people and Government the full support of my own Government and people: we will assist them further through all available channels.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sierra Leone.

Mr. Touray (Sierra Leone): The delegation of Sierra Leone expresses its sincere thanks and appreciation to the President of the General Assembly for having convened these meetings to discuss the current humanitarian situation in Pakistan triggered by the unprecedented torrential rains and floods that have caused so much grief, pain and suffering to the people of that very friendly country. I take this opportunity to convey, on behalf of the Government and people of Sierra Leone, our sincerest sympathy and heartfelt condolences to the Government and the people of Pakistan and to the bereaved families on the tragic loss of life and devastation at this moment of such terrible despair. My delegation views this gathering as timely and looks forward to very fruitful deliberations and commitments on ways of alleviating the suffering of the victims of this disaster.

We fully align ourselves with the statements delivered on behalf of the African Group, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Group of 77 and China by the representatives of Ghana, Egypt, Tajikistan and Yemen, respectively.

We also wish to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan for his briefing yesterday on the ongoing desperate situation in his country. Indeed, his statement and the images from Pakistan seen in the short documentary on the situation screened in the General Assembly Hall yesterday are quite devastating and heartrending. My delegation accordingly takes the floor to express its wholehearted support for and appreciation of the consensus on resolution 64/294, adopted yesterday by the Assembly. We do so in full solidarity with and sympathy for all of those who have been affected by this natural disaster in various ways and also those who have lost their loved ones.

We commend His Excellency Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his leadership and his efforts to alleviate the suffering of the affected masses, evident in his prompt visit to the flood-ravaged areas in order to obtain first-hand information on the extent of the damage caused by the floods with a view to sensitizing the international community on the humanitarian, recovery and reconstruction needs of the country. We equally thank those Member States and humanitarian organizations that have risen to the occasion and are committed and ready to support the Government and people of Pakistan at this very difficult moment.

Let me conclude by reiterating our support for the spirit and objectives of resolution 64/294, which we have here adopted by consensus. We pledge our unflinching moral and spiritual support to our Pakistani brothers, sisters and friends. We fervently hope that those who have lost their loved ones, homes and valued possessions will muster enough courage, wisdom, will and power to overcome the impact of the destruction caused by the floods and be able to resume normal life again. And we urge, in these circumstances, continued international involvement to ease their plight.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

Mr. Ali (Malaysia): We thank the President of the General Assembly for convening these meetings, and we associate ourselves with the statements made yesterday on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Group of 77 and China, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Asian Group. We wish to extend our condolences to the Government and the people of Pakistan on the loss of life and on the suffering of the victims of the floods.

The Malaysian Government has made a contribution amounting to $1 million to Pakistan. This contribution is a manifestation of the solidarity and support of the people and the Government of Malaysia to Pakistan in its time of need. The contribution was extended to His Excellency Mr. Masood Khalid, High Commissioner-designate of Pakistan in Malaysia, by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia on 12 August. In addition, Malaysia has also provided assistance in kind to the flood victims, and we shall continue to do so.

At the non-governmental level, a team from MERCY Malaysia is currently in Pakistan. The team, in collaboration with the Pakistan Islamic Medical Association, has established two clinics, in the Nowshera and Charsadda districts, to assist those who need medical attention and help.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Monaco.

Mrs. Bruell-Melchior (Monaco) (*spoke in French*): In the face of the devastating flooding caused by the torrential rainfall which has raged for over three weeks in Pakistan, the Government and the people of the Principality of Monaco wish to convey their solidarity and sympathy to the Government and the people of Pakistan.

The Secretary-General's account has reaffirmed the unprecedented scale of the disaster and has underscored the evolving and very alarming situation faced by the people of Pakistan. The Principality welcomes the adoption of resolution 64/294, which welcomes the 11 August launch of the Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan and the efforts undertaken by the Secretary-General to intensify the global relief and reconstruction operations.

The Principality wishes to respond to the call of the United Nations and to express its support to the Government of Pakistan to meet the most pressing humanitarian needs of the now 4 million homeless individuals, 8 million individuals dependent on humanitarian assistance and 20 million individuals affected in one way or another.

Thus, within the framework of its emergency humanitarian assistance, the Principality will disburse €100,000 to the Department of Health Action in Crises of the World Health Organization to contribute to the general effort already undertaken in the field of

emergency health and to combat the spread of water-borne diseases in particular.

My country takes this opportunity to thank the many actors who are ensuring the deployment of this humanitarian assistance on the ground.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Montenegro.

Mr. Šćepanović (Montenegro): At the outset, I would like to express, on behalf of the Government and the people of Montenegro, our sincerest and most heartfelt sympathy and solidarity with the people of Pakistan on the tragic losses, enormous damage and tremendous suffering they have experienced following this unprecedented natural disaster.

Allow me to welcome the holding of these plenary meetings of the General Assembly devoted to the strengthening of the coordination and effectiveness of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations. I wish to thank Assembly President Treki for convening these special meetings, which are timely and greatly appreciated, and to express our strong support for the initiative to submit and adopt resolution 64/294, on strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation, reconstruction and prevention in the wake of devastating floods in Pakistan.

I would like also to commend the United Nations and the Secretary-General for their efforts and contributions, through the relevant agencies and mechanisms, in encouraging and providing the widest possible emergency assistance and long-term support for rehabilitation in the aftermath of these catastrophic floods.

Pakistan is currently witnessing one of the gravest natural disasters in recent history and is facing a most challenging time. But at the same time, this is great test of solidarity for the international community and for all of our countries in responding adequately to help, assist and support the Government of Pakistan and the Pakistani people in their present rehabilitation and reconstruction effort, as well as in their long-term effort to build a democratic, stable, secure and prosperous Pakistan.

After having received the dramatic reports from Pakistan and in response to the Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the Government of Montenegro has decided to grant financial assistance in the amount of €50,000 for the emergency needs of the Pakistani people. This is symbolic but from the heart, as an expression of our solidarity and support.

As a country that in the recent past survived a natural disaster in the form of devastating earthquakes, Montenegro is deeply convinced of the importance of international action, support and assistance, both through direct contributions to emergency-affected populations and through long-term contributions for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of affected areas. We remain strongly committed to the strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance.

Once again expressing our sincerest condolences and solidarity with the Pakistani people, I wish to convey our strong support for the efforts of the Pakistani Government to build a better future for Pakistan.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Ms. Calcinari Van Der Velde (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela fully aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Egypt and Yemen on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, respectively. Likewise, we thank the President of the General Assembly for convening these important meetings, which coincide with the commemoration of World Humanitarian Day, which took place yesterday, 19 August.

My delegation also welcomes the introductory statements made by the President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General, the information provided by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and the moving video screened yesterday in this Hall. All of this shows the very precarious situation afflicting Pakistan.

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, on behalf of its people and Government, would like to express its most sincere feelings of solidarity to the people and the Government of Pakistan for the grave situation they are currently facing following the devastating floods, which have taken an alarming toll in human lives, injuries and other victims as well as flooding a large

part of Pakistan's territory. Likewise, we express our most sincere condolences to the families and loved ones of the thousands of victims and our deep sorrow at the significant material damage that has been caused by this natural disaster.

Our delegation reaffirms the content of resolution 46/182 of December 1991, which established the guiding principles of humanitarian assistance: humanity, neutrality, impartiality and respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity. These principles must be scrupulously respected within the framework of international assistance. We therefore reject any attempt to impose actions or measures that seek to interfere in the internal affairs of States and/or to fulfil reprehensible geopolitical interests in the region.

International cooperation must be carried out in accordance with the principle of solidarity and be entirely altruistic. In this respect, we call upon the international community to continue and even intensify their recovery, reconstruction and development efforts, in particular in the affected areas of Pakistan, given the serious socio-economic consequences that this unfortunate and alarming tragedy entails.

To conclude, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela hopes for a prompt recovery for those who are suffering the effects of the devastating flooding in Pakistan, and we hope that these effects will be overcome for the well-being of the Pakistani people.

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Tunisia.

Mr. Ben Lagha (Tunisia): I thank the President of the Assembly for convening these special plenary meetings. His initiative is highly appreciated, as it comes at crucial time, when Pakistan most needs the international community to stand with it.

At the outset let me present, on behalf of my Government, my most sincere condolences to the people and the Government of Pakistan following the unprecedented floods that have been devastating the country over the past weeks. We are deeply saddened by the heavy loss of life and widespread devastation affecting millions of people in that brotherly country.

In these difficult times, my Government would like to reiterate its sympathy and solidarity with the people and the Government of Pakistan and stands ready to join the international community in its efforts to alleviate the suffering of the victims of this natural disaster.

I wish to thank the Secretary-General for his personal engagement to mobilize international humanitarian aid. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs — along with the United Nations family in general — is doing its utmost to provide support and relief and it should be commended for its tireless efforts. These unprecedented floods demand unprecedented assistance, to use the Secretary-General's expression.

It is in such difficult times that solidarity attains its full meaning, as every single act of generosity matters to thousands or millions of people. Tunisia reacted immediately, at the very beginning of this disaster, and has dispatched a planeload of hundreds of tons of relief aid to the victims. Another planeload of humanitarian aid should be arriving today. Moreover, and in line with Tunisia's deeply rooted belief that international relations should also be based on solidarity among nations, the Tunisian head of State has decided to contribute $1 million to further help the Government of Pakistan in its relief efforts.

Once again, I thank the President of the Assembly for convening these timely meetings and for giving us this opportunity to express our sympathy for and solidarity with the people and the Government of Pakistan.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Chile.

Mr. Errázuriz (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Rio Group, I express to the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan our sincere feelings of sorrow and solidarity regarding the devastating catastrophe that has affected that country. These feelings were also expressed in the Rio Group statement of 2 August, which also conveys our most sincere condolences to the families of the victims and to the people and the Government of Pakistan.

In my national capacity, allow me to add the voices of Chile's people and authorities to the expressions of sympathy and solidarity to the people and authorities of Pakistan with respect to the immense emergency that faces them. Chile aligns itself with the statements made by the representatives of Egypt and Yemen on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, respectively.

Given our own experience, we attach great value to the support that the international community provides to address the devastating effects of natural disasters. That is why we want to be part of the support effort for Pakistan, even if we have to do it within the limitations imposed by the devastating consequences of the earthquake that struck us at the beginning of this year.

As a symbol of the solidarity of our people and our authorities with the people and the authorities of Pakistan, Chile will make a symbolic contribution to the Pakistan Initial Floods Emergency Response Plan and will provide support through the multilateral response to natural disasters.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria.

Mr. Nwosa (Nigeria): I thank the President of the Assembly for convening these meetings at this crucial point in the history of Pakistan to show our solidarity with the people and the Government of that country. This is a clear demonstration of the commitment of the international community to promote and protect our collective well-being.

Permit me to reiterate Nigeria's support for the Government and the people of Pakistan and to assure them that they are not alone in this period of grief. Nigeria commiserates with the families of the victims who lost their lives because of this deluge. As a matter of urgency, we call for international efforts that will assist in the rehabilitation and reintegration of displaced people in Pakistan.

We are confronted with a disaster of unimaginable proportions. The statistics are as daunting as they are challenging. Already 1,600 people have lost their lives, while 20 million people are affected by the consequences of the disaster. Vast areas of agricultural land have been submerged; many farm crops ready for harvesting have perished and 700,000 houses have been destroyed.

Urgent action is required to provide humanitarian assistance to the 3.5 million children further threatened by disease and hunger. The international community must come up with strategic plans that focus on immediate delivery and reconstruction to enable the people of Pakistan to regain their livelihoods.

The unprecedented intensity of the inundation, coming so soon after the earthquake in Haiti, and the level of human misery in the inundated areas of Pakistan point to the need for concerted action by all members of the international community to deal with this humanitarian catastrophe. The urgent and sustained action must begin now in order to pre-empt imminent secondary calamities such as diarrhoea, cholera and other deadly diseases which are symptomatic of living in large numbers in makeshift camps and seriously challenged environments.

I must commend the important on-the-spot visit made by the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, to assess the situation in Pakistan himself, as well as his initiative to launch an appeal for the sum of $459 million. This call for assistance from members of the international community is an urgent distress call underlining the importance of solidity of action and the need for some form of robustness and rapidity in getting to the drowning and the hopeless.

Finally, permit me to say again that words cannot adequately express the heartfelt condolences of the people and the Government of Nigeria to the people and the Government of Pakistan on the recent flooding calamity that has befallen the north-western part of that country. Pakistan should rest assured that the turbulence through which it is currently passing is as much a period of misery for Nigeria as it is for Pakistan.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic.

Mr. Ja'afari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): First of all, I would like to associate myself with the statements made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of the Islamic Conference and the Group of 77 and China.

We thank the President of the General Assembly for his initiative of holding these timely meetings in solidarity with the Government and the people of Pakistan as they face the unprecedented natural disaster that struck that sisterly country, which has been enduring many challenges in the past few years. We would also like to extend our thanks to His Excellency the Secretary-General for his prompt initiative in visiting the site of the disaster and personally inspecting the situation in Pakistan.

My delegation would like to express its satisfaction at the General Assembly's consensus adoption of resolution 64/294, on the emergency

humanitarian situation caused by the floods in Pakistan. We believe that this consensus reflects the real meaning of humanitarian solidarity in the face of the natural disasters that have been increasing in frequency in recent decades owing to the inability of the international community to deal with climate change.

My country hosted His Excellency Mr. Asif Ali Zardari, President of Pakistan, in an important visit to Damascus at the peak of the flood disaster. During the visit, President Bashar Al-Assad expressed the solidarity of the Government and the people of Syria with the friendly people of Pakistan. President Al-Assad directed that a cargo plane carrying emergency assistance be dispatched to Pakistan with 35 tons of food, medical supplies and other relief items; it has now arrived in Pakistan. The President also directed that we should support any United Nations initiatives for the relief of the brotherly people of Pakistan.

My country, Syria, is confident that Pakistan will be able to ri again strongly and that it will be able to rehabilitate and rebuild. Here, we share the optimism expressed yesterday by His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan: we are fully confident in the strength of the Government and the people of Pakistan. We have faith that a positive outcome will result from the solidarity that the international community has shown to Pakistan to alleviate the impact of the unprecedented disaster.

In conclusion, I would like to express our sorrow at the material damage caused to the people of Pakistan. We express our condolences to the families of the victims, who met their deaths during the holy month of Ramadan.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the representative of Mauritius.

Mr. Soborun (Mauritius): On behalf of the Government and the people of Mauritius, I would like to begin by expressing our heartfelt sympathy to the Government and the people of Pakistan, who have been affected by the flooding that resulted following the heavy monsoon rains. We send our condolences to the grieving families; our thoughts are with them.

My delegation also wishes to associate itself with the statements delivered by the representatives of Egypt and Yemen on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, respectively. My delegation would also like to thank the President of the General Assembly for the laudable initiative to organize these meetings to brief Member States on the flood situation that is affecting the people of Pakistan. We would also like to express our appreciation to the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, for his leadership and his efforts in mobilizing support for the afflicted people of Pakistan.

For millions of farmers in Pakistan, monsoon rain represents a lifeline. They eagerly await arrival to irrigate their land with a view to reaping a better harvest. However, this year the monsoon rain has turned destroyer, ripping up rice, wheat and sugar cane crops, and leaving behind bloated corpses of cows and goats. The most destructive floods in Pakistan's recorded history have affected an estimated 62,000 square miles of land, which is about a fifth of the country. Around 20 million people have had their lives disrupted and more than 1,600 have been killed.

This prompted aid agencies to say that the present flooding has had a greater human impact than Pakistan's earthquake in 2005, the Indian Ocean tsunami of 2004 and the recent earthquake in Haiti combined.

Sadly, the situation is becoming more perilous by the hour. Water-borne diseases are rapidly spreading among tens of thousands of flood victims. Food shortages are also a major concern now, as the market prices of essential foods have skyrocketed after billions of dollars worth of crops were destroyed by the flood waters.

As the reports of the disaster unfolded in front of us, we were overwhelmed by its magnitude and the destruction, chaos and misery it has left behind. The images of hundreds of thousands of Pakistani citizens living in makeshift camps or by the side of the road soaking up monsoon rains and surviving on handouts haunts our thoughts and cannot leave us indifferent. There is an urgent need to mobilize our efforts to provide all possible assistance to the Pakistani people whose lives have been destroyed by the flood. When the flood waters recede, millions of farmers who contribute significantly to propelling Pakistan's economy face an uncertain future.

Now is the time to show our solidarity with the people of Pakistan. And it is in this spirit of solidarity with the Government and the people and Pakistan that

the Government of Mauritius, under the leadership of the Prime Minister, His Excellency Mr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam, decided on 6 August 2010, to contribute the sum of $300,000 to the reconstruction process. Moreover, a flash appeal telethon will also be organized by the municipality of the city of Port-Louis on 26 August 2010, to channel the eagerness of the Mauritian population to contribute financially and in kind to the global effort to assist the people of Pakistan to get back on their feet as quickly as possible after this disaster.

The history of Pakistan is replete with periods of intense challenges, but the Pakistani people have always faced those difficult situations with boldness and have rebounded with dignity. In the face of such exemplary courage, it is incumbent on the international community to stand by Pakistan, to whom we wish "bon courage".

The Acting President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Algeria.

Mr. Benmehidi (Algeria): At the outset, let me join other delegations in expressing gratitude to the President of the General Assembly for having convened these plenary meetings of the Assembly, beginning on World Humanitarian Day, to consider the humanitarian situation resulting from the devastating floods in Pakistan.

I should like to take this opportunity to commend the Secretary-General for his efforts to mobilize the United Nations and the international community to move as fast as they can to deliver the assistance that is needed. I should also like to thank the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Pakistan, His Excellency Mr. Makhdoom Shah Mehmood Qureshi, for his statement yesterday on the scale of the destruction and other consequences caused by the severe flooding that has adversely affected his country.

Algeria is deeply saddened by the loss of life and the suffering of the Pakistani population. On this occasion, my delegation extends its deepest condolences to the families of those who have died, been injured or lost their homes and possessions. We are here today to share our sympathy and solidarity with the people and the Government of Pakistan at this difficult juncture. I would like to echo Mr. Treki's call to the international community to address the urgent needs in Pakistan.

As far as Algeria is concerned, I would like to announce that my Government has already expressed its solidarity with Pakistan and has provided the Pakistani authorities in Islamabad with the amount of $1 million in emergency aid.

I should like to conclude by expressing our strong hope that this meeting will reinforce the generous support of the international community for the Government and the people of Pakistan in both the emergency and reconstruction phases.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.